

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2761
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TAGS: SNAR, MX

SUBJECT: NARCOTICS - DEATH OF MOPSS RESULTS IN NEED FOR
ADDITIONAL VISUAL RECON AIRCRAFT

REF: 83311

1. ATTORNEY GENERAL FLORES, ACTING ON ADVICE OF HIS STAFF, HAS REVIEWED MOPSS EVALUATION TEAM'S RECOMMENDATIONS, DECIDED TO KILL MOPSS' ROLE IN ERADICATION CAMPAIGN, AND RECOMMENDS RELIANCE ON VISUAL RECONNAISSANCE. HE COMMUNICATED THIS TO CHARGE IN LETTER DATED JUNE 7, ROUGH TRANSLATION OF WHICH FOLLOWS.

2. "THE EVALUATIONS UNDERTAKEN BY PERSONNEL OF OUR TWO GOVERNMENTS CONCERNING THE UTILITY OF INFORMATION PRODUCED BY THE REMOTE SENSING SYSTEM (MOPSS) CONVEY THE OPINION THAT THIS INFORMATION IS NEITHER RELIABLE NOR TIMELY, AND THAT THE DETECTION OF CROPS AND VERIFICATION OF THEIR DESTRUCTION SHOULD CONTINUE TO BE BY VISUAL MEANS, SINCE THIS LATTER TYPE OF RECONNAISSANCE IS, FOR THE MOMENT, THE MORE RELIABLE SYSTEM.

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3. "THE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE SHARES THE OPINION OF THE AVIATION ADVISORS OF THE EMBASSY AND OUR OWN AERO SERVICES THAT THE EXISTING CESSNA 185 AIRCRAFT REQUIRE EXCESSIVE MAINTENANCE IN ORDER TO OBTAIN EVEN A LOW AVAILABILITY, DUE TO THE CONDITIONS IN WHICH THEY OPERATE AND THE FACT THAT THEY HAVE OVER 2,000 HOURS, AND THAT IT IS NECESSARY TO REPLACE THEM WITH AIRCRAFT OF THE CESSNA

206 OR 210 TYPE. IN FACT, WE ARE CONDUCTING MANY VISUAL RECONNAISSANCE FLIGHTS WITH SEIZED AIRCRAFT OF VARIOUS TYPES WHICH RESULTS IN PROBLEMS OF MAINTENANCE, RELIABILITY AND FLIGHT OPERATIONS.

4. "FOR SOME TIME WE HAVE PERCEIVED THE GROWING NEED TO SUPPORT FEDERAL JUDICIAL POLICE OPERATIONS, PARTICULARLY IN THE AREA OF NARCOTICS, WITH AN AIRCRAFT CAPABLE OF TRANSPORTING A REASONABLE NUMBER OF AGENTS TO ANY POINT IN MEXICO. LACKING SUCH AN AIRCRAFT, THE TRANSPORTATION OF AGENTS AND SUSPECTS IS BEING DONE BY SCHEDULED AIRLINE OR LEASED AIRCRAFT, WHICH RESULTS IN THE LOSS OF FLEXIBILITY AND SECURITY.

5. "IN A MEETING THE WEEK-BEFORE-LAST BETWEEN REPRESENTATIVES OF OUR TWO GOVERNMENTS, IT WAS RECOMMENDED THAT A TURBOPROP AIRCRAFT CAPABLE OF CARRYING TEN PERSONS AND POSSESSING ADEQUATE AVIONICS BE PLACED IN SERVICE. I FIND THIS RECOMMENDATION REASONABLE AND CONCUR FULLY."

6. MISSION WILL SUBMIT FOR DEPARTMENT REVIEW RECOMMENDATION TO PROVIDE ADEQUATE VISUAL RECON AIRCRAFT AND ONE TRANSPORT AIRCRAFT. THOMPSON

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